

Apple Bites

Leading the Charge Toward Change

Did you know major changes are underway that will affect every school and classroom in Tennessee? In 2007, Tennessee joined the America Diploma Project network, the goals of which have led Tennessee to redesign how it prepares ALL students for college and the workforce. The umbrella for these efforts is the Tennessee Diploma Project.

How does the TDP affect classroom teachers?

In Jan. 2008, Tennessee adopted new K-12 curriculum standards for math, science and English based on:

ACT readiness benchmarks;
Achieve standards;
College Board standards;
NAEP standards;
higher education faculty input; and

business community input. These standards take effect in the fall of 2009. Intensive, content-focused professional development is planned for 2009 to prepare educators for the change.

Naturally, required student assessments have been revised to align with the new stan-

dards:

- High school students will take new end-of-course exams that will count as part of the student's class grade instead of Gateway exams.
- 8th and 10th grade students will take college-readiness pre-tests to identify early learning gaps that need to be addressed.
- Tests for grades 3-8 have been aligned to reflect the deeper content of the more rigorous standards.

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TDP Timeline

TN joined ADP network - Jan. 2007

Tennessee Diploma Project founded - summer 2007

New standards adopted - Jan. 2008

New standards/assessments implemented - 2009-10

New graduation requirements - for students entering high school in the fall 2009, or later

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

January 2009



*Helping
Teachers Teach
&
Children Learn*

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Arts Professional Development Opportunities

- General Music Workshop
Feb. 7, UT-Knoxville
contact Marvelene Moore
mmoore7@utk.edu

- Middle TN Orff Schulwerk Chapter Workshop,
Feb. 21 and March 28
contact Mallory Yerger
malloryy@wcs.edu

- Middle TN Visual Arts
Workshop - March 7
Renaissance Center, Dickson
Bob.Kutcher@rcenter.org

- TN Music Education
Conference - April 15-18
Nashville Convention Ctr
www.tnmea.org

- TN Arts Academy - July
12-17 Belmont University
www.tennesseeartsacademy.org

Have an article, photo or announcement of interest to colleagues statewide? Send comments or submissions to tned.newsletter@state.tn.us.

Leading the Charge continued...

How do teachers have a voice in the TDP?

K-12 educators serve on the Tennessee Alignment Committee, which oversees the TDP. Educators also had input into the development of the new curriculum standards.

What other roles do Tennessee teachers have in the TDP?

Classroom teachers are essential to the success of the TDP and its goals. It is vital that teachers have a thorough understanding of the new standards and how to impart the content to students. More teachers will be needed to teach the additional course requirements.

Who is impacted by the new graduation requirements?

ALL students entering high school in 2009 or later will be expected to complete the same 'Ready Core' graduation requirements. Some accommodations may be made for students with special needs.

What is the America Diploma Project?

The ADP is the primary initiative of Achieve, a non-partisan coalition of business leaders and governors committed to education reform. The ADP calls on states to redesign the education pipeline to better

Ready Core Graduation Requirements At a Glance

One path for all students

- 22 credits instead of 20
- math required every year of high school, including Algebra I and II
- 3 lab sciences, including Biology I and Chemistry or Physics
- 1/2 credit in personal finance
- an additional 1/2 credit in physical education
- 3 credits in a chosen elective focus

prepare all students for a viable career or college. The ADP operates on the belief that graduates need the same knowledge and skills, whether they plan to enter college or the workforce. To that end, four goals drive the ADP:

1. Align high school standards with the demands of college and work
2. Require the same college and work-ready curriculum of all students
3. Incorporate college and work-readiness measures into the assessment process
4. Hold high schools and colleges accountable for student preparation and success

Six Tennessee Schools Up for National Blue Ribbon School Award

North Greene High
Greene County
Rose Park Math/Science Magnet Middle School
Davidson County
Holice Powell Elementary
Dyer County
West Hardin Elementary
Hardin County
Isaac Lane Technology Magnet
Madison County
DuPont Elementary
Hamilton County

The Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes schools for academic excellence in two categories: schools with at least 40 percent economically disadvantages students that demonstrate exceptional progress and schools that perform in the top 10 percent in the state overall.

Electronic Learning Center Goes Live

www.tnelc.org

Tennessee's new Electronic Learning Center allows teachers virtual access to valuable professional development and educator resources. Hosted by iTunes U, the site is designed to enable teacher and student learning anytime, anywhere.

Examples of resources include workshops on differentiated instruction and character education and subject-specific lessons and enrichment activities. Content will be added on an ongoing basis.

The ELC also can be used in the classroom or referred to students and parents for enrichment or developmental work outside of school.



Above, teachers at Buena Vista Enhanced Option School share how they have used ELC resources in their own classrooms.

Tennessee Teacher of the Year Award 2009-2010

Information about the 2009-10 Tennessee Teacher of the Year Award Program is now online at www.state.tn.us/education/tpd/toy.shtml.



**Tennessee State
Improvement Grant**

RTI... What? : A Look at Response to Intervention in Hardeman County

Response to Intervention is about data-driven instruction, and effective teaching and learning. The RTI approach increases early identification of learning issues instead of reacting to issues as they emerge and relies upon close collaboration between general and special educators.

RTI is characterized by a tiered approach, the first of which uses research-based instruction for all students. Tier two prescribes individual intervention for students not meeting all benchmarks. Tier three involves specialized instruction for students who are non-responsive to instruction at tiers one or two.

The purposes of RTI include identifying students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitoring student progress, and identifying students with learning disabilities. This process is comprised of scientifically-validated instruction,

interventions and systematic formal assessment. The RTI approach has been researched since the 1970s and evidence of its effectiveness has been documented for twenty years. The 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Act required additional RTI-type processes be carried out prior to a Specific Learning Disabilities referral. IDEA also now includes the RTI evaluation method as an option to the traditional IQ Achievement Discrepancy method as a way to identify students with learning disabilities.

Hardeman County's H.E.A.R.T. - Hardeman Empowering Achievement Response Team

"Reading is a challenge for our children, even after graduation, as they enter the workforce or post-secondary education. We are continually reminded by business and industry that reading skills are critical for an individual to be employable and successful..."

"I prefer to view H.E.A.R.T.

as a process - structured, yet flexible, and adaptable to the needs of each child, one child at a time. We must identify what is best for this particular child, on this particular day."

- Dr. Donald Hopper, Director of Hardeman County Schools

"I continue to be astonished at the leadership, insight, and initiative of [Dr. Hopper]. He attends almost every county meeting about RTI, large and small, complimenting, encouraging, and assuring the coaches and teachers in Hardeman County that their work is valued."

"The literacy coaches in Hardeman County are amazing... Teachers put their shoulders to the wheel and never looked back."

"[During classroom visits] I saw teachers who had equipped their classrooms to work for all students, all learning styles, and all abilities. Teachers who had struggled with the change

Testimonies from Hardeman County continued...

process in August were diversifying instruction and meeting student needs in incredible ways. Most of all, I saw students learning in ways that had probably not been available to them before Dr. Hopper led Hardeman County to hire Debbie Williams to coordinate and direct this effort and to place coaches in the elementary schools.”

“At our most recent group session, four teachers shared how the H.E.A.R.T. process is working for them. Fellow teachers listened, questioned, and gathered round during breaks and after the session to ask more questions, writing as they listened so that they could remember to take that instructional technique back to improve their students’ learning.”

- Kandy Smith, State Improvement Grant School Consultant

“RTI is like putting a big puzzle together. The key to our success is that Ms. Smith meets with us on a regular basis, and the literacy facilitators meet ev-



Hardeman Schools Superintendent Dr. Donald Hopper observes HEART in a third grade classroom.

ery week. These meetings ensure each school receives the same information and all teachers follow the same procedures.”

“It also helps to have such wonderful, dedicated teachers and such incredible support from the administration. Dr. Hopper and Instructional Director Gene Ross continue to be in the forefront, checking on classrooms and evaluating the fidelity and effectiveness of instruction. It is not often that an entire district can work as a team on one puzzle until it is completed.”

“It could have been an overwhelming year for teachers, but they are embracing the challenges, implementing

exemplary comprehensive literacy classrooms consisting of 90-minute, uninterrupted reading blocks with whole group, small group and differentiated instruction centers.”

- Debbie Williams, Program Specialist, Hardeman County Schools

“As Literacy Facilitator, my role is to assist and support the teachers with new reading instructional skills and techniques, as well as provide them with information and training in the H.E.A.R.T. process. As a liaison between the district office and the school staff, I meet with the staff weekly to keep them abreast of new information and proce-



State Improvement Grant school consultant Kandy Smith works with Hardeman County teachers during a HEART workshop. For more information about Rtl: The IRIS Center at Vanderbilt: http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/rti01_overview/chalcycle.htm

dures.”

“Most of our teachers agree the H.E.A.R.T. process is more effective than traditional instruction due to more individualized contact, easier differentiations, and a focus on all components of reading. Teachers are quite accustomed to my presence in their classrooms, and if necessary, my demonstrating a method of teaching. We are all learning together, so the teachers are willing to take on any challenges we may have, in order for the students to receive the best education possible.”

- Christy Smith, School Literacy Facilitator

2009 TEACHER MENTORING ACADEMIES

This **TEAM** event provides strategies for teacher professionals who serve as mentors, peer coaches, and/or instruction facilitators to implement with beginning teachers or those challenged by high-needs settings. A team consists of at least one administrator and two teachers, but no more than 5 members total.

Event Details:

Nashville, March 2-3 + a 3rd day TBD (event # 99002)

Knoxville, March 5-6 + a 3rd day TBD (event # 99012)

Dyersburg, March 9-10 + a 3rd day TBD (event # 99022)

The team leader should submit a registration form (see page 7) for each team member. Submit the form(s) to Grace Jones via mail or fax at (615) 532-8312. For information, contact Kaneal Alexander at Kaneal.Alexander@state.tn.us or Grace Jones at (615) 532-4734. A confirmation letter and fact sheet will be sent to the team leader to verify that team members have been accepted for the academy.

REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION FOR
THE TENNESSEE MODEL FOR TEACHER MENTORS
2009

Location _____

Educator's Name _____

Social Security # _____

Position _____

School _____ System _____

School Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ School Phone _____

FAX (_____) _____ Home Phone _____

Home Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email Address _____

**(A form will need to be completed for each member of the team)

Names of other team members _____

Submitted by _____ Team Leader _____

Principal's Signature _____

Date _____

*SS# MUST BE PROVIDED BEFORE YOU WILL BE REGISTERED FOR AN EVENT.

Return form to Grace Jones via fax at (615) 532-8312

Grace Jones
Tennessee Department of Education
Professional Development
710 James Robertson Parkway
5th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower
Nashville, TN 37243-0376

For more information, call Kaneal at (615) 532-1635 or Grace at (615) 532-4734.